P.H. Rome 30 March, 1873

My dear Maria

Yours of the 1st was very pleasant with all the nice news of our family & your hand writing is excellent, but I am afraid in this desperate weather you may at times be wanting something & I beg you to tell me, for I am still saving up my pennies

It is a comfort to me what Arthur has done for now I can have a cab when my legs fail – I drive out to some pleasant spot & then walk back sometimes I am 3 hours & even 4. I get home without a leg to stand on

No doubt my Consulate has done harm to my painting for scarce any one comes now to see my work & the English regard me as an amateur & my pictures only copies, this grieves me but I dont know how to remedy it

My party & housekeeping is very successful & I am really very comfortable & not paying over much for it all – My good Doctor is in full practice & he & his ladies are very contented

I am very busy setting all my large room to rights for I have an excess of furniture

We continue to have the most beautiful Spring and I am planning some excursions as my Doctor will go with me which will give me all the confidence I require

I have entirely left the Archæological society for Mr Parker the head behaved very badly & would not pay me my rents & was very offensive, but I referred the matter to an arbitration & so he was obliged to pay - He has tried to court me back to aid in the lectures but I refuse to have any thing more to do with him or his society - so they have scandalized me in the most absurd manner but in Rome this is nothing new, where scandal is the order of the day - You will remember Dr Small & his reporting me to the P. O. & how I beat him, so it is with nearly all my enemies, for as I am not what is invitable I take 'em one by one & do for 'em with fair argument - indeed this has been one of my chief difficulties

19th March

To day is the Festa of San Joseph & I have lots of visits & a fine dinner with no end of flowers, this is an Italian custom & is very pleasant – I am shortly to make some little journeys with the good Doctor (for I am afraid to attempt travelling alone on my age) as he thinks me quite strong enough, indeed I have picked up since the fever most bravely & am now painting with some pleasure in the return of my strength

I get such good accounts of my dear ones & I have now 18 grandchildren

29 March – At times I feel intolerably idle but now I'm glad to tell you that I have resumed my painting & am putting the last touches to my Cana which has been on hands these 9 years – I am quite able to work except a certain degree of apathy keeps me back at times

Now I am all concentrated in one noble large room, having just arranged every thing